

In the U.S., many have called the post Korean War period from 1953-1964 the fabulous 50's. The U.S. had not only escaped WWII with little destruction but the gearing up of industrial capacity during the war made the country leap from an agricultural nation into an industrial giant. Post war America helped restart war-torn economies of friend and former foes alike across the globe. Ike embarked on building an interstate highway system that allowed faster flow for commerce within the U.S. More than ever before, our country became a true collection of united states. The victory from WWII was still flush in the national consciousness and a feeling of pride resonated across the nation. Psychological issues from returning WWII and Korean War veterans were not publically discussed.

TV news and information about world events was limited. Youthful rebellion during this time had all the innocent types of trappings that many generations before them had experienced: new slang, new dress, and new music. Elvis and Jerry Lee took the raw sexuality of the black delta south and made it available to young white kids.

Yet even with Elvis's brand of Rock and Roll, there was still a life paradigm that kids copied from their parents. Many boys followed their fathers' occupation in a country that was economically on top of the world.

This fabulous period eroded quickly. There was a brief romantic period with a youthful president but that was followed by a botched invasion of Cuba in 1961. A year later, the threat of a nuclear exchange occurred when the Soviets brought missiles to Cuba. The term, mutually assured destruction was discussed in coffee shops across the country. Many expressed that the end of the world was near. Live for today became a new catch phrase punctuated by the shock of JFK's assassination in 1963.

It wasn't possible to forget losing a president but when Beatles played for Ed Sullivan in Feb 1964, young people were thinking that change was in the air. Young and nimble Cassius Clay knocked out the bruising powerhouse, Sonny Liston. LBJ spearheaded a Civil Rights Act to restart the effort Lincoln had begun one hundred years before. Hope for the underdog began to surface.

But any illusion of peace came to an end when the Marines hit the beach in Da Nang in 1965. During the late 60's baby boomer youth

were turning 18—draft age. The war had already dragged on for three years and was only escalating. There was no end in sight. Many older brothers and close friends returned home wounded or in flag covered coffins. Others had unknown fates as POWs. The war was real and devastating in every town in America.

The selective service allowed for a temporary draft deferment for kids going to college. For people that could afford school, enrollments jumped. With military service and Vietnam looming over their immediate future, college students and their professors initiated discussion about the validity of the domino theory and a growing apprehension of our involvement in Vietnam. Some colleges became centers for protest against the war.

Students in Asian history classes learned about the harsh rule the Vietnamese endured under the French during their colonial period. Was this a war of independence passed down from the French? Serious questions about the government's truthfulness began to arise as well as the justification of the war.

Anti-war sentiment and isolationism had been around in all previous wars to some degree but by 1967 an unprecedented movement much larger than any before it, was in full swing. Oil drums filled with burning draft cards.

A new rebellion came into its own—the hippie movement, a movement politically energized by the Vietnam War and the selective service. Like all the other generational gaps before, hippies had: new slang, new dress, and new music. Getting drunk was replaced by getting stoned. Drunk was belligerent and mean. Stoned was peaceful and friendly. Make love not war.

But this 1967 version of rebellion was also searching inward to deal with issues such as participation in the Vietnam War. Experiments with mind-expanding drugs initiated questions about the decision making of our parents' depression era generation. Much of America's youth figured that a total transformation was needed. How to create this change had various trains of thought. Some thought politics could still be the answer and championed peace candidates during the 1968 election. Others took to the streets in protest of the war. But there were also those who saw too many entrenched elements in our culture to change. The assassination of Bobby

Kennedy and the heavy-handed reaction to protests at the Democratic Convention in Chicago were events that demonstrated to them that the effort was futile to change the way politics worked at the highest levels of our government. Some of those drifted to more rural areas set up farm communes within the U.S. The most dissatisfied left the country to Canada and beyond.

Many of the hippie's experiments with changing with world faded after the end of the Vietnam War but in some ways the inward search continued. Although the term PTSD was coined in 1990 to discuss the psychological effect of stress on the veterans returning Vietnam War, it also began to provide insight about the way things were growing up as a baby boomer with fathers returning from WWII and Korea. "Journals From The Edge" chronicles the unraveling of that mystery during that period before 1990.

Now, more than ever, with veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan the spotlight continues on **War Trauma** or PTSD.